

# THE INDYPENDENT

Issue #66, March 16 – 30, 2005

**A FREE PAPER FOR FREE PEOPLE**

## HELP KEEP THE INDY STRONG

Since we first started publishing five years ago, *The Independent* has covered some of the most dramatic events in recent world history – from the heady days of the global justice movement to the terrible events of September 11. While the mainstream press was busy waving the flag and screaming for blood, *The Independent* rose to the occasion, building “a free paper for free people” with lots of hard work and almost no money.

Good intentions don't pay the bills. *The Independent* is actually independent. There is no man behind the curtain choosing the content and paying the bills. We aren't beholden to advertisers or a wealthy patron.

But now we need help from you. We are in a fiscal crisis and need to raise \$10,000 if we are to continue publishing regularly for the rest of the year.

In some ways, we've been a victim of our own success. When the Iraq war began two years ago, we started publishing twice a month to better reach tens of thousands of New Yorkers hungry for real news. We've been printing more papers, more often, working hard to increase distribution in and around New York City, now to more than 500 locations. But the bills are piling up, and we want to concentrate on reporting the news that's vital to those fighting for social and economic justice.

*The Independent* has joined in the outpouring of dissent from the World Economic Forum to Feb. 15 to the Republican National Convention, when we printed more papers than any radical paper in recent American history. That *The Independent* exists at all is a testimony to the unpaid work of scores of people, not just in New York, but around the world.

*The Independent* has won more awards from the Independent Press Association for the last two years running than any other local paper. And we've pissed off all the right people. Since last summer, the NYC Indymedia has been investigated or subpoenaed by the FBI, Secret Service, NYPD and the City of New York. We must be doing something right.

Our budget is shoestring, our expenses minimal – we have no paid staff. The vast majority of our funds go to printing and distribution. *The Independent* can be found in more than 500 locations in and around New York City. But we'll have to scale back our distribution unless we get your support.

Think about the vital importance of having a truly independent voice in times like these. Think about how we highlight hundreds of people's struggles, extraordinary and everyday, or how we provide a forum for debate and ideas.

Please show your support today when it matters most, whether it's \$25 or \$500. You can go to our website, [indypendent.org](http://indypendent.org), click on the donate button and make a contribution with a credit card. We've also attached envelopes to many issues in which you can mail a check or money order made out to *The Independent*. Or you can fill out the form on the back page and send to:

*The Independent*  
34 E. 29th St.  
New York, NY 10016

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR SUPPORT  
TO HELP KEEP US GOING STRONG.



**CONDI GETS  
HER GROOVE  
BACK P14**

**VENEZUELA:  
REVOLUTION OR BUST P12**

**SOCIAL SECURITY:  
REPUBLICANS ON THE RUN P5**

[indypendent.org](http://indypendent.org)





## NEW YORK CITY INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

**Phone:**  
212.684.8112

**Email:**  
imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org

**Web:**  
indydependent.org  
NYC: nyc.indymedia.org  
U.S.: us.indymedia.org  
GLOBAL: indymedia.org

**Office and Mail:**  
NYC Independent Media Center  
34 E. 29th St. 2nd Floor  
NY, NY 10016

### WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

*The Independent* is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for *The Independent*, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

### VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Chris Anderson, Silvia Arana, Jay Bachhuber, Caitlin Benedetto, Bennett J. Baumer, Jed Brandt, Mike Burke, Leigh Ann Caldwell, Antrim Caskey, Ellen Davidson, Terence Dignon, Ryan Dunsmuir, Ari Edelkind, Miguel Erb, Chiam Garcia, Alfredo Garzon, Neela Ghoshal, Lauren Giambrone, David Gochfeld, Maggie Gram, A.K. Gupta, Wes Hannah, Ruth Kelton, Ida Lake, Jordan Lovet, F. Timothy Martin, Edgar Mata, Nik Moore, Lydia Neri, Ana Nogueira, Donald Paneth, James Powell, Derq Quiggle, Frank Reynoso, Ann Schneider, Mike Schuwerk, Sheba Sethi, Andy Smenos, Andrew Stern, Catriona Stuart, Maggie Suisman, John Tarleton, Regina Taufen, Xavier Tayo, Liz Tillotson, Leanne Tory-Murphy, Rhianna Tyson, Matthew Wasserman, Steven Wishnia and Amy Wolf

**COVER PHOTO:**  
[WWW.FREDASKEW.COM](http://WWW.FREDASKEW.COM)

# Unwelcome Guest

## GUJARATI CHIEF MINISTER ACCUSED OF COMPLICITY IN ANTI-MUSLIM MASSACRES SPARKS PROTEST IN U.S. VISIT

BY TAMIKO BEYER

The scheduled visit of Narendra Modi, Chief Minister of the state of Gujarat, India, to at least two U.S. cities has generated outrage among South Asians, human rights groups and others.

Modi, accused of complicity in the anti-Muslim pogroms that devastated Gujarat in 2002 and of continuing to target religious minorities, has been invited by the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) to speak at their annual convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on March 24. He is also scheduled to speak at Madison Square Garden in New York City on March 20 and may visit other parts of the United States.

### TERROR IN GUJARAT

Three years ago, as many as 2,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed over a period of a few days in Gujarat. Some 200,000 people were consequently internally displaced, and the riots caused millions of dollars worth of property damage.

The National Human Rights Commission of India, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have all condemned Modi's administration for its role in the mass killing, rape and brutality. Currently, there are two legal cases lodged against Modi in Gujarat.

"This is not a man that the AAHOA should invite to speak to the future of Asian American business," says Dr. Angana Chatterji, Associate Professor in the Social and Cultural Anthropology Program at the California Institute of Integral Studies. "This is a man we should hold accountable for crimes against humanity and genocide."

Chatterji is part of the Coalition Against Genocide (CAG), which was formed by a wide spectrum of U.S.-based organizations to mobilize against Modi's visit. CAG and groups such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) have taken steps to prevent Modi from coming to the United States, including asking the AAHOA to rescind its invitation.

CAIR and others have called on the Bush administration to block Modi's visit based on Section 604 of the International Religious Freedom Act that denies entry to any foreign official who has engaged in "particularly severe violations of religious freedom."

CAG also asked Chris Matthews of MSNBC to withdraw from his planned appearance at the convention unless Modi's invitation is cancelled. According to reports, Matthews cancelled, citing a "scheduling conflict."

The AAHOA insists that their invitation to Modi has nothing to do with politics. Treasurer Danny Patel has been quoted by the *Hindustan Times* as saying, "We are inviting the Chief Minister of Gujarat, who may be any individual. We want to hear him on investment opportunities in the state."

"Investment is a method for securing livelihood, dignity, peaceful coexistence for all the people of Gujarat," Chatterji notes. "How can Narendra Modi speak to these values?"

This controversy takes place within a larger concern about the presence of Hindu nationalists in the United States. According to a press release from CAG, AAHOA's invitation "raises the speculation that Indian American professional organizations are being infiltrated by sectarian ultra-nationalists and have become conduits for their fundraising and political support in the U.S." A CAG report also states that some leaders of the AAHOA have been linked to such groups.

"For the past 10 to 15 years, Hindutva fascist groups have... established a network that funds pogroms and massacres in India,

as well as schools that indoctrinate children in Hindutva ultra-nationalist philosophy," says Dr. Shaik Ubaid of the Indian-Muslim Council-USA. "Before Mr. Modi's invitation, most Americans were not aware of the activities of the [Hindu] right wing in the U.S."

"This is not so much about Modi, though he has done terrible things," says Ubaid. "This is about the ideology that turns people into killers and rapists, and how groups that promote this ideology are working here in the U.S."

*Public protests against Modi are being planned and will be announced on [www.CoalitionAgainstGenocide.org](http://www.CoalitionAgainstGenocide.org). The protest in New York is scheduled for 4 p.m., March 20 outside of Madison Square Garden.*



Malaak Shabazz, youngest daughter of Malcolm X, speaks to the press at the Audubon Ballroom on the 40th anniversary of her father's assassination. PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY

# Malcolm X Remembered

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Harlem's historic Abyssinian Baptist Church rocked and riveted to fusion jazz and a long line of speakers marking the 40th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. Organizers of the Feb. 21 commemoration also recognized community activists who received the "Spirit of Malcolm X" award. Luminaries from NAACP lawyer Percy Sutton to activist Viola Plummer reflected on Malcolm's life and legacy, and the Welfare Poets provided a musical introduction. At times when speakers acknowledged various civil rights movement and black cultural dignitaries in the crowd, audience members would crane their necks to get a look.

After Malcolm X left Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam in 1964, elements within that group began calling for Malcolm X's death. On February 21, 1965, as he was giving a speech at the Audubon Ballroom, a man yelled, "get your hand out of my pocket," as he struggled with another person. As Malcolm tried to calm down the crowd, gunmen opened fire, killing him.

"I heard a disturbance in the middle in front of me... then I heard [a] shot being

fired. I saw Malcolm X hold his chest and felled back," wrote Robert Edward, a member of Malcolm X's Organization of Afro-American Unity in a police statement that day in 1965.

At the time of his death, Malcolm X was working to bring the United States government up on charges before the United Nations because of the treatment of blacks in America. Malcolm was also moving closer to other civil rights leaders and third world liberation movements.

Video of Malcolm X's speeches at Abyssinian Church and other locations peppered the night. His speech at Abyssinian in 1963 entitled "The Black Revolution" rang particularly relevant as the Bush administration wages war in Iraq and across the globe. "No one here in this church tonight can deny that America is the mightiest government on earth today, the mightiest, the richest and the wickedest."

Poet Sonia Sanchez brought the evening full circle, beginning her presentation with a rhythmic run down of names of civil rights leaders and then seamlessly transitioning into her speech.

"We are here not because of a few men, but a system."

## HIP-HOP RALLY

NEW YORK, March 4 - About 200 people gathered in Union Square in protest of HOT 97/WQHT, which claims to be the "home of hip-hop," after it aired a parody song ridiculing tsunami victims. PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY





# South Bronx Rezoning Sellout

BY EMERSON SKY

On March 9, the New York City Council approved sweeping zoning changes for the Port Morris section of the South Bronx that many residents, local artists and business owners say will lead to violent gentrification and displacement. The major local concerns were that the changes were devised with little local input, lacked any guarantees of affordable housing, and did not give priority to waterfront access.

Local opponents charge that the zoning changes, prepared by the Department of City Planning (DCP), would turn the neighborhood into SoHo and pave the way for big-box stores to acquire public subsidies and move in. Home Depot is seeking about \$36 million in tax-exempt bond financing to help it build a warehouse, distribution and fulfillment center on 132nd Street in Port Morris.

"Rezoning as is will only foster a Port Morris that will quickly force the displacement of those moderate and low-income persons now living there, and ultimately make the area completely unaffordable to South Bronx residents who would like to stay or return to the area in the future," Hector Soto, of the Center for Social Empowerment told the Council. "The South Bronx should not be for sale to the highest bidder at the expense of those who live there now, or those who want to live there in the future."

The changes extend the Port Morris mixed-use district to 11 surrounding blocks, which DCP maintains would also allow for residential use and community facilities, even though residences exist there already, and the plan does not identify or mandate any community facilities. According to DCP, the area surrounding the existing district is ripe for an increase in luxury residential and commercial activity.

The Pratt Institute Center for Community



"I want to relax in life, that's all I want," says Rolando Sosa, owner of Tróchez Upholstery, who came to Port Morris from Honduras 22 years ago. PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY

and Environmental Development says the rezoning would allow the development of more than 2,300 new housing units during the next 10 years, with no guarantees that any of it would be affordable. In addition, it would result in substantial windfalls for politically connected and savvy private landowners in the area, with property values increasing up to six-fold.

One reason area residents had little input into the process was that the South Bronx did not have a representative on the council for the first six weeks of the year, until Maria del Carmen Arroyo won a special election to replace former Councilmember Jose M. Serrano Jr., who was elected to the state senate in November. Before and after being elected, Arroyo pledged to support anti-displacement guarantees and require at least half the housing created under the rezoning plan to be affordable for people with low and moderate incomes. But representatives from the South Bronx Coalition for Inclusionary Zoning who met with

Arroyo, and attended council hearings to urge her either to oppose or delay the rezoning plan because of its failure to include affordable housing, are disappointed. "It seemed to us that the Councilwoman was not willing to take a stand on this issue," said Soto. "She seemed to be defending the rezoning as is, and rehashing the pro-plan arguments of the Planning Commission and its other backers."

Interestingly, the city's negotiations with Home Depot were never brought up at any of the public hearings or information sessions, leaving some council staff bitter. One legislative aide wishing to remain anonymous said, "It's typical of City Planning and the administration. They barely show you what's in one hand, with the other hand behind their back rolled into a ready fist."

A public hearing on Home Depot's request for the 132nd Street land is scheduled for 10 a.m., April 7, at the Industrial Development Agency offices at 110 William St. in Lower Manhattan.



**SOUTH BRONX WATERFRONT:** Ideal canoe launch. PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY

## THE PEOPLE'S LAWYER

### City on the Spot in RNC Hearings

By Ann Schneider

The National Lawyers Guild is eagerly preparing for a March 28 contempt hearing that will be the first courtroom exploration of the city's justification for holding hundreds of people in detention as long as 40 hours after their arrests during last summer's Republican National Convention (RNC).

The city flouted two court orders during the RNC to expedite the release of detainees and was eventually cited by Judge John Cataldo for contempt of court. Now it must justify why it could not process arrestees in the normal way during that week, considering that the courts were fully-staffed in expectation of a large number of arrests. Attorney Norman Siegel maintains that the NYPD had a policy of preventive detention, and intended to keep protesters off the streets until Bush finished his acceptance speech.

The Guild has obtained documents the NYPD used to assert that the 24-hour rule didn't apply during the RNC. Deputy Chief John Colgan told the City Council in advance that because the RNC was a "national security event," the NYPD would not be giving out desk appearance tickets. Out of a total of 1,781 arrests, 77 percent of the cases to date have either been dismissed or adjourned in contemplation of dismissal. Twenty people were charged with felonies. To date, there have been no felony convictions.

The NYPD also must account for why it took people to Pier 57, a toxic former bus depot on Manhattan's west side, while the Brooklyn and Queens Houses of Detention were open and waiting.

Judge Cataldo has approved the Guild's subpoenas of Martin Horn of the NYC Department of Corrections and Michael Donegan of the State Department of Corrections, who may testify against each other. The City has blamed the State for taking as much as five hours to return fingerprints, but the State maintains it processed 94 percent of prints in one hour or less.

Guild Attorney Gideon Oliver said the City was acting in contempt of court because all of the processes the NYPD had in place during the RNC were designed to elicit personal information (fingerprinting, rap sheets and filing multiple accusations) rather than to move people quickly through the arrest process. Fingerprinting is not generally required for offenses as minor as disorderly conduct or parading without a permit.

The Hudson River Park Trust, which owns and operates the bus depot, has complained openly that they were not "fully informed of NYPD's true operational plans for the facility."

Meanwhile, the NYPD has stonewalled other attempts to learn in advance of the hearing what internal decisions were taken by the City and why. On Dec. 10, a state oversight body condemned the NYPD's refusal to release documents requested by the New York Environmental Law and Justice Project.

All of which means the contempt hearings will be fast-paced and exciting, as the public has its first chance to hold the NYPD accountable for its protest-policing tactics during the RNC. Come early if you want to grab a seat.

The hearing will begin on March 28 in Judge Cataldo's court at 9:30 a.m. at 100 Centre Street, Part 83 on the 13th floor, and will continue through the week. The People's Lawyer is a project of the National Lawyers Guild (nlg.org).



## Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union

*Your Community Financial Institution  
serving your needs since 1986*

### Free Tax Preparation\*

It's your money ...claim it!

37 Avenue B at 3rd Street  
New York, NY 10009

Monday 1:00 – 7:00 pm  
Wednesday 5:00 – 8:00 pm  
Friday 5:00 – 8:00 pm  
Saturday 2:00 – 5:00 pm

\* Income restrictions apply

For more information visit  
us at [www.lespfcu.org](http://www.lespfcu.org) or  
call us at 212.529.8197!

### About Your Credit Union:

- Mission Driven
- Not-For-Profit
- Member Owned
- Community Oriented
- Reinvests money in the community & members
- Friendly and Convenient
- A safe, sound and democratic alternative to traditional banks

### Lending Products

Credit Cards  
Personal Loans  
Co-op Loans  
Mortgage Loans  
Business Loans

### Financial Products


Savings Accounts  
Free Checking  
Share Certificates (CDs)  
Business Accounts  
Debit and ATM Cards  
Financial Education

*...and More!*

37 Avenue B, New York, NY 10009  
Tel: 212.529.8197 Fax: 212.529.8368  
Open: Tues-Fri 10:00-3:00 pm  
Thurs 4:00-7:00 pm & Sat 10:00-1:00 pm

134 Avenue C, New York, NY 10009  
Tel: 212.598.0022 Fax: 212.598.0288  
Open: Mon, Wed, Fri 1:00-7:00 pm





BOOKS | COFFEE | DEMOCRACY

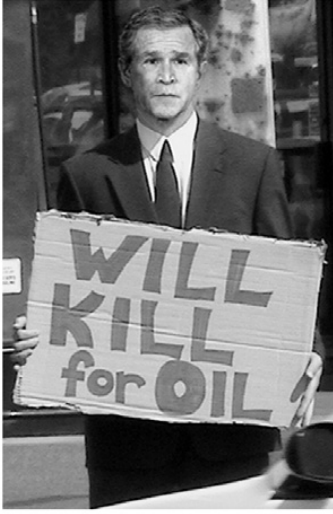
VOXPOPNET.NET | 718.940.2084  
1022 Cortelyou Road, Brooklyn

The NEW  
**InstaBook**  
 Technology  
 NOW IN NYC!

Vox Pop prints  
**your**  
 paperback BOOK,  
 right here  
 in our bookstore

BOOKS: kids | 9/11 | anarchist  
 green-capitalist | marxist | feminist  
 black nationalist

Available at  
**WWW.CONTEMPL8.NET**  
 12 different T-Shirts & Stickers




Designed to Disturb the Status Quo!

CONTEMPL8 T-SHIRTS

APRIL 9TH + 10TH NEW SCHOOL UNIVERSITY 65 5TH AV

**NYC GRASSROOTS MEDIA CONFERENCE 2005**



Organized by a mix of NYC Grassroots Media makers

Sponsored by:  
 The Media Studies Masters Program at The New School University

DIY WORKSHOPS. YOUTH PANELS. MEDIA CRITICISM FORUM  
 POLITICAL ART EXHIBITION. MINI FILM FESTIVAL  
 \$8 YOUTH/ \$20 ADULTS/ \$30 SAME DAY REGISTRATION  
 TICKETS AVAILABLE AT NYCGRASSROOTSMEDIA.ORG  
 AND BLUESTOCKINGS BOOKSTORE 172 ALLEN STREET  
 FOR MORE INFO: EMAIL INFO@NYCGRASSROOTSMEDIA.ORG  
 OR CALL PAPERTIGER AT 212-420-9045. FLYER BY BETA MINUS

analysis

# DisUnion:

AFL-CIO SCHISMS OVER ORGANIZING

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Something odd is happening in the decades-staid AFL-CIO – a group of unions is challenging do-nothing unionism and the funneling of the labor federation’s millions into the Democratic Party.

Coming out of the labor federation’s March meeting in Las Vegas, a group of unions led by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) argued that the AFL-CIO should place more resources into organizing the unorganized and create a leaner and more centralized labor movement.

The SEIU is making noise that they may leave the federation if reforms are not made. Though not as defining as the 1935 labor meeting when John Lewis, the fiery industrial unionist, punched the conservative craft union leader William Hutcheson for refusing to organize unskilled factory workers, presidents from the SEIU and the large public sector union, AFSCME, cussed each other over the right to represent 49,000 child care workers in Illinois.

The SEIU argues that by re-organizing the AFL-CIO into unions with defined jurisdiction, this poaching would cease.

On his blog, SEIU President Andy Stern lambasted unions which opposed a Teamster proposal that echoed many of his union’s goals.

“Those who opposed this proposal do not want the union movement as a whole to have a strategy for uniting workers’ strength in each industry. They want their own unions to be free to divide workers by organizing in any sector. They don’t want to have to shift resources to helping workers organize.”

As a former organizer with a local affiliated with the SEIU, I personally saw multiple do-nothing union locals from other parent unions poach and attempt to make deals with management while workers were organizing with SEIU. However if the SEIU left the labor federation, poaching would increase as unions, freed of AFL-CIO internal guidelines could raid each other’s members.

Stern and his allies in other unions are dead-on about the need to organize the unorganized as unions represent only 7.9 percent of private sector workers. The AFL-CIO’s decision to pour more money into lobbying and into the Democratic Party is the same strategy they have had for decades. And union membership has declined steadily for decades.

But the SEIU style of election-centered, staff-run organizing campaigns has its limitations without widespread worker upheaval. Even if unions could overcome obstacles thrown up by the pro-business National Labor Relations Board and double the number of workers they organize each year it would be the year 2036 before they regained the same weakened position they had in 1983 after President Ronald Reagan broke the air traffic controllers union.

The personal toll of the SEIU style of organizing can be taxing. Organizers typically work 60 to 80-hour weeks away from home, and the “binge and purge” method of hiring young people leaves many good organizers disillusioned with the labor movement. The SEIU’s “wave program” brings in dozens of organizers each year though the union spits out just as many.

The future of the labor movement may be decided in the short term by staffers in the AFL-CIO’s larger unions; however, workers on the shop floor must be empowered to steer the labor movement and fight its battles. In the SEIU, we organized non-union workers into the union and won substantial economic increases in their lives. But the fight doesn’t stop there. Our union local didn’t have a political education department, or clear means for workers to express power in the daily workings of the union.

The SEIU-led reforms will mobilize members as bodies, but not their minds.



**WE WIN:** The coalition of Immokalee workers and its supporters celebrate a March 8 announcement that fast food giant Taco Bell had agreed to their demands for a pay increase. PHOTO: JACQUES-JEAN TIZIOU/JJTIZIOU.NET

# No Quiero Taco Bell

FARMWORKERS WIN RAISE FROM FAST-FOOD GIANT

BY SUSAN CHENELE

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) had planned to cap off their 2005 labor rights Taco Bell Truth Tour with a conference on global justice and a mass convergence in Louisville, Kentucky at the headquarters of Yum! Brands, the fast-food chain’s parent company. However on March 8, Taco Bell and workers negotiated a precedent-setting agreement on labor conditions that turned the protest into a party and the conference into a discussion of what the coalition’s next steps should be.

Aboard the bus back to Florida, coalition spokesperson Lucas Benitez told *The Independent*, “For those who pick tomatoes for Taco Bell, it is an immediate economic change. In a larger sense, it is a hopeful change for all workers, because we’ve committed to seeking out others to help improve conditions for all farmworkers. We will continue working with Taco Bell to motivate others in the fast-food industry to follow Taco Bell’s leadership.”

The agreement has been hailed as having wide-ranging implications not only for the fast-food industry but for grassroots organizing in general also. It was reached amid intense pressure built up over several years, culminating in the week-long sojourn. The road trip tour kicked off on February 28 in Immokalee, Florida, and finished in Louisville on March 5. They also parked the bus in Atlanta, Montgomery, Nashville, Memphis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, and stopped in other cities on a nine-state tour.

Taco Bell has agreed to pay the penny-per-pound surcharge on picked tomatoes demanded by the farmworkers, and to work with the CIW to raise working conditions throughout the supply chain and across the industry as a whole. In return, the Immokalee workers ended their four-year national boycott of Taco Bell, which gained wide-ranging support from churches, unions, and universities across the country, as well as high-profile endorsements, ranging from actors Martin Sheen and Susan Sarandon to former President Jimmy Carter and AFL-CIO head John Sweeney.

Adding a penny per pound of tomatoes picked may not seem like much, but it adds up. The approximately 1,000 workers employed by Taco Bell’s tomato suppliers, who now make 40-45 cents for each 32-pound bucket they harvest, will earn at least 72 cents for that quantity—a 60 to 80 percent increase, which means approximately \$20 more per day for the farmworkers. Currently, these workers earn about \$7,500 a year, without health insurance or paid vacations. According to Benitez, this agreement “would mean almost reaching the poverty level.”

The one-cent-per-pound “pass-through” funded by Yum! Brands, the parent company of Taco Bell, will be funneled directly to the workers through a small number of tomato suppliers. As reported by the *Tallahassee Democrat*, Yum! spokesman Jonathan Blum said the company will eat the added cost and that it will not be passed on to Taco Bell’s customers. He also stated that Taco Bell would only work with suppliers that comply with the agreement, which does not pertain to Yum’s other fast-food chains, KFC, Pizza Hut, Long John Silver’s and A&W All-American Food Restaurants.

In addition to the pay increase, the agreement also includes a code of conduct for Taco Bell’s suppliers. The code explicitly bans indentured labor – transporting workers to Florida and then forcing them to work off that cost – which, while already illegal, does occur. Yum! Brands has pledged its commitment to monitoring its suppliers for compliance with this standard and with all other existing labor laws. The agreement also sets up a process by which workers can file complaints about payment or treatment. Grievances will be jointly investigated by the workers coalition and management at Yum! Brands. The company also agreed to help the coalition establish a strategy to lobby the Florida Legislature for laws requiring better working conditions throughout the industry.

## Immigrant Rally in Queens



Hundreds of immigrants marched on March 5 through the streets of Corona and Jackson Heights to protest the recent crackdown by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles on nearly 300,000 driver licenses held by immigrants. Since January, 2004, the DMV has sent thousands of letters to immigrants stating that there is a problem with their Social Security number. If those notified cannot provide a valid Social Security number, they will lose their ability to drive legally in New York and may face deportation. PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY

# Bush Loses Round One

Thanks to successful grassroots organizing and unity among Senate Democrats, America is rejecting Bush's campaign for Social Security privatization. But the Republicans vow not to give up – and they have the money to keep their campaign going.

BY ERIC LAURSEN

Down in Washington, the big story in the Social Security battle is congressional Democrats' surprising unity against a heavily bankrolled White House campaign to win public support for partial privatization. After absorbing big losses in last November's election, the Democrats are uncharacteristically speaking with one voice against privatization while the normally disciplined Republicans are tripping over each other with mixed messages and competing policy positions.

The main reason for the Democrats' confidence is that the numbers favor them. While the Republicans enjoy a comfortable majority in the House, in the Senate they hold only 55 seats whereas they need 60 votes to stop a Democratic filibuster.

A handful of Democratic senators have spoken of their desire to work with Bush on "reforming" Social Security. But aides to several say privately that's only because they come from states that voted for Bush last November and have to appear cooperative.

In reality, Democratic opposition to Bush's plan appears solid. Bush would let workers carve out part of their payroll tax contributions to Social Security to set up individual investment accounts while reducing the basic benefits that the system provides to retirees and borrowing trillions in new federal debt to underwrite the scheme.

Along with the crisis Bush's plan could create for generations, privatization is liable to slowly squeeze the income of families that would have to support the elderly as their Social Security benefits dwindle. That may be one reason labor unions and pro-Social Security groups like the Campaign for America's Future (CAF) have had such success bird-dogging Bush and Republican lawmakers as they've crisscrossed the country in recent weeks trying to sell privatization.

## SHARP QUESTIONS

After outlining his plan in his State of the Union address, Bush announced that he would visit 60 cities in 60 days for a series of carefully scripted "town hall meetings." Some 70 Republican House members, too, fanned out while Congress was in recess during the week of Presidents' Day to sell their constituents on the idea that Social Security is in crisis and must be drastically restructured. What the lawmakers mainly encountered was lukewarm support – if any – and sharp questions.

Hoping to attract the younger voters who they believe have lost faith in Social Security and want private accounts, they instead met older workers and retirees who were deeply skeptical of the idea that the stock market can replace guaranteed retirement benefits.

Credit the CAF, the AFL-CIO, and such unions as the United Auto Workers for helping to get concerned activists out to meet and greet the GOP. The underwhelming reception to the Republicans' charm offensive threw their congressional leaders into disarray, with

some suggesting compromises and others hinting they might have to abandon the whole idea of privatization for this year.

**THE PRIVATIZERS BATTLE ON**  
Polls show that, if anything, support for private accounts is slipping.

The White House and its point person on Social Security, Treasury Secretary John Snow, still insist they will win. Bush advisor Karl Rove has set up a campaign-style war room at the Treasury Department, and conservative groups including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and USA Next, a group connected with John Kerry-bashing Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, have raised tens of millions of dollars for Snow to keep the privatization offensive going for months in TV and print ads.

So long as Senate Democrats, led by Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), remain solid, it might not matter. But some major question marks loom. Leading Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg and campaign manager James Carvill are urging the party to come up with their own plan to save Social Security, and preempt Bush's familiar tactic of charging "obstructionism."

Others argue that the party has nothing to lose by simply standing its ground and everything to lose by proposing its own plan, which could give Bush the leverage to pressure them into a bad compromise.

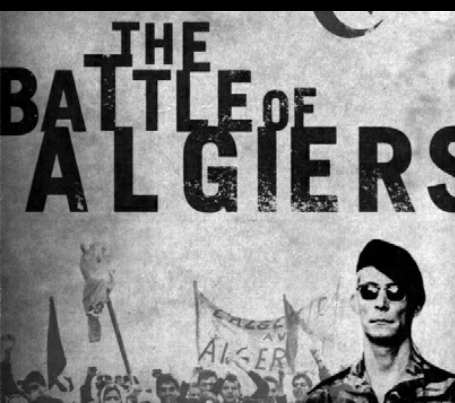
Another question is how strong a grassroots coalition the Democrats have really built. Arguably, the greatest public-policy victory labor has won in the past decade was the breakup of a mating dance over Social Security between congressional Republicans and the Clinton White House in the late nineties. That victory owed a lot to labor's ability to mobilize its membership, both at home and in Washington.

With Bush and his allies vowing to fight on, progressives may have to keep their supporters in the field for the long haul.

*Eric Laursen, a New York-based journalist and activist, is writing a book, **The People's Pension: The Politics of Social Security Since 1980.***

**IMC MOVIE NIGHT**  
**Thurs. March 31 7:00 p.m.**

**THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS**



34 E. 29th St. 2nd floor btw. Park & Mad.  
212-684-8112 sliding scale 5 - 8 \$  
— food & drink available —

A Grassroots Response to War and Occupation

# SHOCKING AND AWFUL

## Deep Dish TV Presents A 13 part award-winning series

**The Real Face of Occupation**  
**Standing with the Women of Iraq**  
**National Insecurities**  
**The Art of Resistance**  
**Dance of Death**  
**Erasing Memory**  
**Globalization at Gunpoint**  
**The World Says No to War**  
**Empire and Oil**  
**Channels of War**  
**Resistance at Home**  
**Baghdad**  
**World Tribunal on Iraq**

**Amy Goodman said, "This fantastic series is the most comprehensive look at the war!"**

**Available now through the Deep Dish Website**

**For Orders:**  
**339 Lafayette St**  
**New York, NY 10012**  
**www.deepdishtv.org**  
**deepdishtv@igc.org**  
**212 473 8933**





# IN BRIEF

## DISABLED VETERANS JEER GOP LAWMAKERS

Hundreds of disabled veterans booed and jeered Republican House members on March 8 to protest proposed new Department of Veterans Affairs budget. The group, Disabled American Veterans said a budget increase of more than 1.1 percent is needed in order to serve the large number of service members expected to return from Iraq and Afghanistan with missing limbs, mental illnesses and other service injuries.

## LEAVE NO CHILD UNRECRUITED

Democratic Congressman Mike Honda of California has introduced a bill that would make it easier for parents to block military recruiters from gaining access to their high school-aged children. Honda wants to amend a provision of the No Child Left Behind Act that requires school districts to provide the Pentagon the names, addresses and phone numbers of every student in the school. Honda wants to bar schools from giving out the personal information without the explicit approval of the student's parents.

## HALLIBURTON'S FUZZY MATH

Halliburton subsidiary Kellog Brown and Root (KBR) may have overcharged the US military by more than \$100 million for its fuel delivery services in Iraq. Military auditors have released a report questioning \$108 million of KBR's \$875 million no-bid contract to provide fuel services to Iraq from May 2003 to March 2004. The auditing agency believes "KBR paid an unreasonable price for the fuel" as well as charging excessive shipping costs. In one incident, KBR purchased \$82,100 worth of liquefied petroleum gas in Kuwait and then charged \$27.5 million to deliver it to Iraq. The audit was completed in October 2004 but its release was delayed by administration officials.

## PLUMBERS UNION PENSION PLUMMETS

Due to misconduct and disastrous management of Plumbers and Pipefitters National Pension Plan investments, rank and file union members have lost \$1.2 billion from their retirement fund. Union President Martin Maddaloni and Secretary-Treasure Thomas Patchell were order to step down from their positions overseeing the pension fund by the Department of Labor. According to Labor Notes, both officials will receive the remainder of their union salaries and benefits. The pair were given union-owned cars as well, in exchange for their resignation. Adding insult to injury, union officials announced a 75 percent cut in pension benefits and raised dues to cover pension losses. The Labor Department has ruled that Maddaloni's 2002 presidential election was flawed. Rank-and-file workers, who have been fighting for union democracy, are organizing to retake control of the union.

## EPA'S DANGEROUS MERCURY POLICY

The Environmental Protection Agency is poised to allow corporations to trade mercury emission credits instead of implementing uniform emissions limits. Environmentalists charge that allowing corporations to trade emissions would foster festering "hot spots" of mercury contamination. Through exchanging the credits, corporations would be able to delay full and final compliance on mercury levels. Mercury enters the water supply through smokestacks, usually located at power plants, and is especially harmful to pregnant women. Furthermore, environmentalists content that the highly toxic mercury is not regulated as much as other pollutants such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides.

# Fallout from Stewart Case

## THE CONVICTION OF LYNNE STEWART THREATENS THE RIGHT TO COUNSEL

BY ANN M. SCHNEIDER

The Feb. 10 conviction of longtime radical attorney Lynne Stewart on terrorism charges has sent shock waves through the defense bar, which was certain Stewart would prevail against what amounted to a government witch-hunt. Stewart and her co-defendants Abdel Sattar and Arabic interpreter Mohammed Yousry face up to 30 years in prison when they are sentenced in July.

"The government is bent on intimidating attorneys who provide zealous representation to unpopular clients," said National Lawyers Guild (NLG) President Michael Avery.

Asked if his practice had changed since the verdict, NLG attorney Daniel Scott said "Yes, because my head has changed. The more they expand the definition of terrorism, everybody's suspect."

Stewart expressed faith in the jury throughout its four weeks of deliberations while still bringing with her two suitcases in the awful chance she was convicted and bail not granted. After the conviction, she criticized herself for brash talk that "couldn't have endeared herself to the jury," such as calling her former client's prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald "evil." But at trial, her statements came across as measured, well-thought-out and circumspect. She showed herself to be knowledgeable about world politics and history, and a very dedicated attorney who didn't sever ties with her clients immediately after a conviction.

In truth, it was a very difficult case to defend, as the prosecutors had all of their evidence gathered in advance. They were able to clearly show that Stewart had signed a promise not to let her client, the blind Egyptian Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, communicate with the outside world; and they were able to

take statements she made in private to her imprisoned client out of context. This allowed them to get a grand jury to indict Stewart and her translators. An early and major trial victory for Stewart was the ruling that the entire conversations must be read to the jury so as to provide necessary context.

Ultimately, the jurors must have believed there was a possibility of the Sheik's followers engaging in violence to free him, even though the prosecution couldn't cite any such acts. To have acquitted her, the jury would have had to conclude that there was a contra-

*The government is bent on intimidating attorneys who provide zealous representation to unpopular clients.*

diction between Stewart's moral duty to her client and what the law permitted her to do. As one blogger put it, "If the law is unconstitutional (the defense attorneys may not talk to the press, the prosecution may talk all it wants) then I think the defense attorney unfortunately doesn't have a choice but to break the law." Apparently that conclusion was too much to expect of a jury who sat in lower Manhattan.

Although Stewart's conviction is tragic, the conviction of Mohammed Yousry rests on far less evidence. Yousry was an assistant professor at York College and a non-practicing Muslim who the Sheik on occasion glared at and scolded. Unlike Sattar, he had no role in the transmissions of any communications except those Stewart specifically approved. (Sattar, it turned out, wrote the fatwa calling for the killing of Jews, and the Sheik refused to renounce it, once issued.)

As Yousry stated in an interview, he had previously worked for nightly network news as an Arabic translator, and was once asked to translate a statement made by Osama bin Laden for NBC. All the government could say in closing was, "Well, he didn't have to translate for this client, Sheik Rahman. He shouldn't have been there."

Long-time Brooklyn criminal defense attorney Jerome Karp said that the Stewart verdict is "very disconcerting" to the defense bar. Jerome Karp said "It's chilling to know the government was listening in to an attorney-client conversation with impunity." He elaborated, "One might disagree with Stewart's actions, if the prosecution's allegations are true, but to violate the attorney-client privilege is unforgivable. It strikes at the heart of our system."

Stewart's supporters have begun a second major organizing drive and defense committees have been established in a number of major cities. Organizers look to win support for her among both the public and prestigious groups like bar associations.

Stewart has retained Joshua Dratel, co-author of *The Torture Papers: The Road to Abu Graib* as her appeals counsel. Stewart told The Independent, "We have a tremendous record, thanks to Michael Tigar (who withdrew due to health problems). We have nearly a motion made a day."

Among the issues Stewart plans to raise are the constitutionality of the Special Administrative Measures and the violation of attorney-client privilege. Former New Jersey Superior Court Judge Andrew Napolitano wrote after the conviction, "In the good old days, only Congress could write federal criminal laws. After 9-11, however, the Attorney General was allowed to do so. Where in the Constitution does it allow that?"

APRIL 15-16, 2005 GRADUATE CENTER (CUNY), NYC

[www.2005leftforum.org](http://www.2005leftforum.org)

# GLOBAL LEFT DIALOGUE 2005 LEFT FORUM

## The U.S., the World, and the Next 4 Years

**FIRST CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:** Tariq Ali, Barbara Ehrenreich, Bill Fletcher., Jr., Ellen Meiksins Wood, Toni Negri, Robin Kelley, Amy Goodman, Michael Ratner, Luciana Castellina, Manning Marable, Barbara Ransby, Peter Gowan, Michelle Fine, Doug Henwood, Frances Fox Piven, Gerald Horne, Rosa Clemente, David Harvey, Rose Brewer, Robin Blackburn, Leo Panitch, Christine A. Kelly, Barbara Garson, Christian Parenti, Stephen Eric Bronner, Maria Helena Moreira Alves, Michael Hardt, Stephen Duncombe.

**FEATURING PANELS:** The Bush administration II and the world I Iraq I The post-affirmative-action era. I Space within global neoliberalism for local progressive government I Globalization and the politics of everyday life - The collapse of social-democracy I Organizing and the media I The military-industrial complex in U.S. politics and life I Socialists, anarchists, and other traditions in dialogue I New imperialism I Hip-hop politics today I The nation-state and the global justice movements I Fundamentalism, faith-based initiatives and the "values" challenge I The neoliberal assault on the academy and resistance I New directions for Marxism I Africa, Asia, and the Americas in resistance I The future of the Democratic Party I Electoral politics and social reform movements I China and the global economy I and much more.

**CONTACT US:** Global Left Dialogue c/o P.D. Program in Sociology, Graduate Center (Room 6115), 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (212) 817-2003 [info@2005leftforum.org](mailto:info@2005leftforum.org) [www.2005leftforum.org](http://www.2005leftforum.org)

# Don't Call it Defense

## THE U.S. MILITARY BUDGET

BY DON MONKERUD

With his budget for fiscal 2006, President George W. Bush appears to be fulfilling the priorities of the American electorate by emphasizing the “defense” budget. But upon closer examination, the budget reveals a drift towards the creation of a nation dedicated to military pursuits.

News accounts proclaim the military and homeland security “fiscal winners” in the budget, but an even larger portion of tax dollars are being used for military purposes than government statistics and charts indicate.

To promote Bush’s “war on terrorism,” the budget boosts military operations in the Department of Defense (almost 5 percent), the Department of Homeland Security (7 percent), and the Justice Department (17 percent). The \$419.3 billion Department of Defense budget is 41 percent higher than the pre-Sept. 11 2001 budget, and a whopping 73 percent above the 2000 budget.

In comparison with military spending by other countries, these sums are staggering.

Based on 2003 figures, the world spent approximately \$956 billion on the military, ten times more than it spent on development assistance in 2001. Adding the cost of the military occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan to the proposed 2006 “defense” budget, the U.S. will spend \$500 billion on direct military purchases.

That means the U.S. will spend more on the military than the combined total that the rest of the world spent in 2003. This is eight times more than China, which boasts the world’s second largest military, larger than the next 23 nations combined and seven times larger than the combined military budgets of Russia and China.

But the U.S. military budget fails to account for other military expenditures, which, if added together, account for an even larger share of world spending and a much larger share of the U.S. budget than indicated.

Recall that Bush’s expected \$81 billion “supplement” for the occupation of Iraq and

Afghanistan was added to the military budget, which at \$500 billion is, in current dollars, almost 10 percent higher than at the height of the Cold War and 15 percent higher than during the peak of the Vietnam War. Other money in the budget devoted to military spending includes the cost for Defense/Civil programs (\$44.5 billion); Homeland Security (\$33.3 billion); and Veterans Affairs (\$68.3 billion). This pushes the total military budget to \$646 billion. Add \$4 billion in foreign military financing from the Department of State and the total reaches \$650 billion.

Other spending is hidden deeply in many departments such as Justice, Energy and NASA. While it will require experts to reveal these hidden funds, the cost of the bonds to pay off past military spending needs to be included in the total cost of the U.S. military. In an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Robert Higgs calculates that debt-financed defense spending amounts to almost \$139 billion, which brings the total amount

that the U.S. spends on military projects in 2006 to \$789 billion.

In other words, the U.S. spends 30.7 percent of total government funding on the military, much more than the 17 percent that initial calculations disclose. This is a larger percentage than that of Health and Human Services or Social Security, and reveals the Bush Administration’s militaristic priorities.

As a larger proportion of U.S. resources goes to the military, domestic programs are being cut and the wealthy are given additional tax breaks (\$26 billion more in 2006). Over the next five years, Bush plans to cut \$212 billion from domestic programs, such as Medicaid, food stamps for 300,000 low-income families, and child care assistance for 300,000 children. Rather than paying for military increases with taxes, they are allowed to become part of the deficit, which will continue to run over \$400 billion a year.

Military costs could go even higher. The Administration’s budget figures exclude any future costs for the occupation of Iraq and

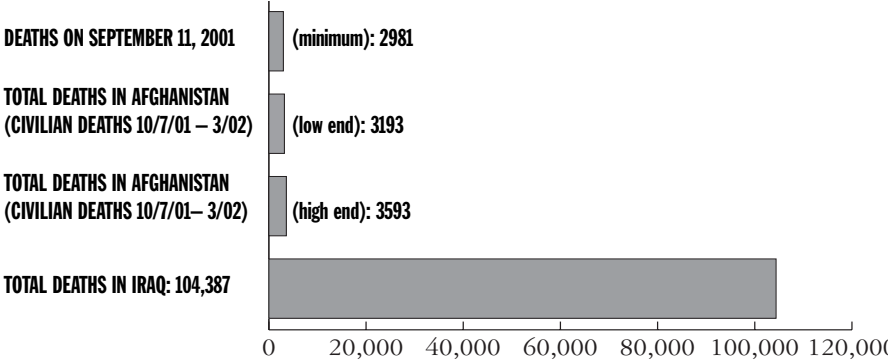
### OFFENSIVE SPENDING

The economic cost of the Iraq war is fast approaching \$200 billion. New Yorkers have pitched in \$6.6 billion of that, according to the National Priorities Project. Here are some other ways our money could have been used:

- More than make up the \$6.1 billion in projected health care cuts in New York State over the next 10 years
- Fund Beacon after-school programs for 5.5 million students
- Restore the \$207 million Community Development Block Grant, which is used to pay for day care centers, housing, services for the elderly and literacy training for the poor, almost 32 times over
- Provide 11 million Section 8 vouchers for housing
- Bridge the city’s “broadband gap” and pay for ten years of cable modem service for 500,000 small businesses
- Provide almost 87 million monthly MetroCards
- Create 880,000 blocks of bike lanes, or purchase 13.2 million new bicycles at \$500 per bike

Sources: National Priorities Project, NYC Department of Youth and Community Development’s Beacon Program, New York Times, Transportation Alternatives, Center for an Urban Future, 2004, FamiliesUSA, West Side Bicycles (Manhattan), Bay Ridge Bicycle World (Brooklyn), Paragon Sports (Manhattan), New York Times—Research by Melissa Morrone of the Radical Reference Librarians/radicalreference.info

### AMERICA STRIKES BACK



Sources: The 9-11 Commission Report, www.9-11commission.gov; CNN, www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2004/oef.casualties Professor Marc Herold, Cursor, www.cursor.org/stories/civilian\_deaths.htm The Brookings Institution, Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Iraq Index, http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex “Mortality before and after the 2003 Invasion of Iraq: Cluster Sample Survey.” Lancet, 11/20/2004, Vol. 364, Issue 9448. Research by Melissa Morrone/Radical Reference Librarians

Afghanistan – already running \$300 billion – or the cost of possible new military adventures against North Korea, Syria or Iran.

Such expenses do nothing to make the country safer. According to World Markets Research Center, which released the World Terrorism Index, the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, “has exacerbated anti-U.S. sentiment.”

Spending vast sums of money on the mil-

itary will create more demand for military invasions and occupations and a spiraling need for more military funding. As Bush and the GOP shift priorities to the military, America is in grave danger of relying on the military to address its political and social problems while being seen around the world as a militaristic state and a pariah among nations.



**SOCIAL  
ECOLOGY**

n 1: a coherent, radical critique of current anti-ecological trends

2: a reconstructive, ecological, communitarian, and ethical approach to society

*Popular education for a free society*

### 2005 SUMMER INSTITUTE:

Sustainable Design, Building & Land Use  
MAY 28-JUNE 17

Playback, Hip-Hop, Alternative Media & Social Change  
MAY 28-JUNE 5

Remaking Society: A Social Ecology Summer Intensive  
JUNE 25-JULY 24

Theoretical Inquiries in the Age of Globalization  
JULY 31-AUGUST 7

Science, Technology, the State and Globalization  
AUGUST 18-21

**YEAR ROUND OFFERINGS:**  
BA Program with Burlington College  
MA Program with Prescott College

**For more information, contact:**

Institute for Social Ecology  
1118 Maple Hill Rd.  
Plainfield, VT 05667  
(802) 454-8493  
info@social-ecology.org

www.social-ecology.org

The ISE Summer Session takes place on the ISE campus in the hills of Central Vermont





# ENLISTING FOR PEACE: A GRASSROOTS RESISTANCE MOVEMENT TAKES ON THE PENTAGON

As the war in Iraq moves into its third year, the U.S. military faces growing opposition both inside and outside its ranks. "Counter-recruiters" are battling the Pentagon in high school cafeterias and on university campuses for the hearts and minds of young people of limited means who overwhelmingly fill the military's ranks. Returning Iraq War veterans and the families of slain soldiers are speaking out in increasing numbers. A steady trickle of soldiers are refusing orders or fleeing to Canada to request asylum. More than 5,000 soldiers have gone AWOL, according to the Pentagon. Each incident is minor and often little-noted, yet forms a part of a larger mosaic of resistance. —JT



## Counter-recruiting



## Insubordination



## Conscientious objectors



## Military families speaking out



## Direct Action



## Mass Action

## Camilo Mejia

Former Staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia was a platoon leader in Iraq from April to October of 2003 while serving with the Florida National Guard. Deeply disturbed by what he had seen, Mejia, 28, became the first soldier to publicly refuse to return to Iraq. He was court-martialed and sentenced to a year in prison. Before his release last month, he wrote a letter reflecting on his personal odyssey:

People would ask me about my war experiences and answering them took me back to all the horrors — the firefights, the ambushes, the time I saw a young Iraqi dragged by his shoulders through a pool of his own blood or an innocent man was decapitated by our machine gun fire. The time I saw a soldier broken down inside because he killed a child, or an old man on his knees, crying with his arms raised to the sky, perhaps asking God why we had taken the lifeless body of his son.

I commanded an infantry squad in combat and we never failed to accomplish our mission. But those who called me a coward, without knowing it, are also right. I was a coward not for leaving the war, but for having been a part of it in the first place. I failed to fulfill my moral duty as a human being and instead I chose to fulfill my duty as a soldier.

One of the reasons I did not refuse the war from the beginning was that I was afraid of losing my freedom. Today, as I sit behind bars I realize that there are many types of freedom, and that in spite of my confinement I remain free in many important ways. What good is freedom if we are afraid to follow our conscience? What good is freedom if we are not able to live with our own actions? I am confined to a prison but I feel, today more than ever, connected to all humanity. Behind these bars I sit a free man because I listened to a higher power, the voice of my conscience.

<http://www.freecamilo.org>



## Military Resistance Links

Coalition Against Militarism in Our Schools  
<http://www.militaryfreeschools.org/>

Counter-Recruitment and Alternatives to Military Program (CRAMP)  
<http://www.afsc.org/pacifcsw/counter-recruitment.htm>

<http://www.projectyano.org/>  
Project on Youth and Non-Military Alternatives

Educators to Stop the War  
<http://educatorstostopthewar.org>

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO)  
<http://www.objector.org/>

Iraq Veterans Against the War  
<http://www.ivaw.org>

Veterans for Peace  
<http://www.veteransforpeace.org/>

War Resisters League  
<http://www.warresisters.org>

Military Families Speak Out  
<http://www.mfso.org/>

Citizen Soldier  
<http://www.citizen-soldier.org/>

GI Rights Hotline  
<http://gights.objector.org/>  
800-394-9544

For Breaking News, see  
[www.counterrecruiter.net](http://www.counterrecruiter.net)



## BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA

**Feb. 23, 2005**—Students at Kennedy High School win the right to set up an anti-war information table at the school after an international campaign of support overwhelms school district administrators.



## KANSAS

**September, 2003**—Angry wives of soldiers in the 129th Transportation Company create a web site to protest the government's use of "Stop-Loss" measures to keep their husbands in Iraq and receive 8,000 on-line signatures.



## SEATTLE

**January 20, 2005**—Hundreds of students walk out of local Seattle schools to protest the war in Iraq. At Seattle Central Community College, students surround an Army recruiters' table and tear up enlistment literature, eventually forcing the recruiters to leave campus.



## SAN FRANCISCO

**March 9, 2005**—Over 100 students at San Francisco State University surround military recruiting tables at a university job fair and hold an impromptu teach-in. The recruiters abandon their tables an hour early.



## ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA

(located near San Diego)  
**2003**—Fernando Suarez de Solar, father of one of the first U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq, founds Proyecto Guerrero Azteca to help educate Hispanic youth who are being heavily targeted by military recruiters.



## SAN DIEGO

**DEC. 6**—Petty Officer 3rd Class Pablo Paredes of the Bronx refuses to board a ship taking 3,000 Marines to Iraq. Paredes is currently applying for Conscientious Objector status.



## OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

**March 14, 2004**—Stephen Funk, the first conscientious objector imprisoned for refusing to fight the Iraq War, returns home from six months in prison to a community celebration.



## JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI/IRAQ

**October 2004**—An entire 18-member platoon from the 343rd Quartermaster Company refuses to deliver a shipment of fuel from the Tallil Air Base near Nasiriyah to Taji, another base north of Baghdad. Many of the soldiers were from Jackson, Mississippi.



## FORT STEWART, GEORGIA

**January 7, 2005**—Sgt. Kevin Benderman, a decorated nine-year Army veteran, refuses to return to Iraq with his combat unit. The military has denied his request for Conscientious Objector status and his court martial trial date has been set for May 11.



## MADISON, WISCONSIN

**Nov. 11, 2005**—Five protesters are arrested after refusing to leave a military recruiting station until it was turned into a financial aid office.



## TORONTO, CANADA

**January 2004**—Pvt. Jeremy Hinzman flees to Canada with his wife and two-year old son rather than fight in Iraq. Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board is currently considering his precedent-setting appeal for refugee status. 60,000 U.S. citizens fled to Canada to evade military service in the Vietnam War.

**Dec. 6, 2004**—Stating that U.S. soldiers were routinely expected to commit war crimes, former Marine staff sergeant Jimmy Massey testified at an asylum hearing for Jeremy Hinzman that his unit killed at least 30 unarmed civilians in Iraq during the 2003 war invasion and the occupation that followed.



## VERMONT

**March 1, 2005**—48 Vermont communities vote during their annual town hall meetings to approve a resolution calling on President Bush and the Congress to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq.



## BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**July 28, 2004**—Describing themselves as a "a group committed to saving lives and ending the violence in Iraq by an immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces." 12 returning Iraq War vets found Iraq Veterans Against the War. A month later, they march at the front of a 500,000 person demonstration in New York against the Republican National Convention.



## VESTAL, NEW YORK

**Feb. 2005**—Brendan Walsh, 20, is sentenced to five years in prison for throwing a Molotov cocktail threw the window of a military recruiting station in April 2003.



## NEW YORK CITY

**March 9, 2005**—Four City College of New York students are arrested after they attended a job fair organized by the college, and stood up in front of a National Guard recruitment table chanting anti-war slogans.



## NEW YORK CITY

**March 5, 2005**—More than 750 students, teacher and labor activists from around the East Coast gathered to participate in the founding conference of Educators to Stop the War.



## NEW YORK CITY

**Oct. 16, 2004**—New York University Law students protesting the military's policy of discriminating against gays and lesbians linked arms to prevent an Army lawyer from meeting with potential job recruits.



## NEW YORK CITY

**Jan. 31, 2005**—Military recruiting stations are attacked after hours in the Flatiron section Manhattan and Parkchester in the Bronx.



## LANSING, NEW YORK

**March 11, 2005**—Four pacifists plead innocent in federal court to charges stemming from a March 17, 2003 protest at a military recruiting station in Lansing, New York outside of Ithaca. The St. Patrick's Day 4 poured their blood on the station's windows, walls, the U.S. flag and on the stand-up cut-outs of smiling military recruits in order to make "visible the blood that is shed by the work of the center."



## WAYNE, NEW JERSEY

**February 28, 2005**—A student at William Patterson University is charged with "defiant trespassing" while passing out anti-recruitment fliers near a military recruitment table.



## FORT DIX, NEW JERSEY

**September 2004**—635 soldiers in the South Carolina Army National Guard are confined to their barracks for two weeks before being shipped out to Iraq after 13 members of the unit go AWOL.



## HAMILTON, NEW JERSEY

**September, 2004**— Sue Neiderer is arrested for trespassing after interrupting Laura Bush at a campaign event to ask why her son was killed in Iraq.



## BOSTON

**May 26, 2004**—A Boston College student is charged with making a false bomb threat after standing on a milk crate outside a recruiting station wearing a black hood and cape with attached stereo wires to his hands to protest torture at Abu Ghraib prison.



## PHILADELPHIA

**Nov. 30, 2004**—Frustrated by the lack of government resources for local homeless families, several dozen members of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union briefly take over a military recruiting station.



## PHILADELPHIA, PA

**March 4, 2005**—Youth Philadelphia Area War Resistance set up a "Temporary Autonomous Zone" in front of City Hall for some "DIY Education," giving students an opportunity to learn from each other about how the military targets low-income youth and youth of color.



## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Dec. 6, 2004**—A class-action lawsuit is filed challenging the government's use of "Stop Loss" orders that require soldiers to stay in the military past the time of their enlistment. A federal judge dismissed the lawsuit in February. Thousands of soldiers have been forced to remain in the military and fight in Iraq due to Stop Loss.



## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**February, 2005**—Mike Honda (D-CA.) introduces the Student Privacy Protection Act of 2005. The legislation would block public schools from releasing personal information about students to recruiters without the explicit permission of the student or parent. Nine Democrats have signed on as co-sponsors.



## SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND

**Dec. 6**— Three government-owned cars were destroyed by fires in Silver Spring Maryland. They were parked behind an office shared by recruiters for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. Similar fires were reported a week earlier in Fairfax and Chintilly, Virginia.



## WAYNESBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Staff Sgt. Jimmy Massey used to recruit young people to join the Marines. After killing a number of unarmed civilians in Iraq, he has become a searing critic of the war. *Cowboys from Hell*, a memoir about his military experiences, is scheduled to come out later this year.



## MIAMI, FLORIDA

**March, 2004**—Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejia of the Florida National Guard becomes the first American veteran of the Iraq war to publicly refuse further service. He spent nine months in prison before being released in February.



## TENNESSEE/KUWAIT

**Dec. 8, 2004**—Two thousand soldiers publicly jeer Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld when he dismisses concerns of a Tennessee National Guard member about poor equipment during a "town hall meeting". Rumsfeld's comments create a PR backlash that nearly cost him his job.



## FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

**MARCH 19, 2004**—Returning Iraqi vets and Military Families Speak Out lead a 1,000 person protest march to the gates of the 82nd Airborne on the first anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Thousands are expected to attend a similar protest this year to mark the second anniversary of the war.



## MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

**March 28, 2003**—Vandals paint antiwar graffiti on five Navy vehicles and set a large Navy truck ablaze.



# IN BRIEF

## U.S. USES CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN IRAQ

The US military has been accused of using the banned chemical weapons mustard gas and nerve gas during the recent siege on Fallujah. The Iraqi Health Ministry made the accusation after it sent a team to the largely abandoned city to assess health conditions. Officials predicted the city's residents would be suffering health consequences for many years to come.

## JUDGE DISMISSES AGENT ORANGE LAWSUIT

In New York, a federal judge has dismissed a class action lawsuit filed by group of Vietnamese citizens who accused U.S. chemical companies including Dow and Monsanto of committing war crimes during the Vietnam War by supplying the U.S. military with the chemical agent. The suit seeks billions of dollars in damages and for an environmental clean-up of Vietnam. Agent Orange contained the toxic chemical dioxin which has been blamed for causing health disorders and birth defects in both the Vietnamese population and U.S. war veterans. The National Academy of Sciences has concluded that the U.S. military sprayed over 3,000 Vietnamese villages with Agent Orange affecting between two and five million people. The Vietnamese Red Cross estimates 150,000 children have been born with birth defects since 1975 because of Agent Orange.

## RACHEL CORRIE'S FAMILY SUES CATERPILLAR INC.

The family of Rachel Corrie has sued Caterpillar Inc. two years after an Israeli soldier driving one of the company's bulldozers ran over and killed Corrie. She was killed in the Gaza town of Rafah where she was protesting the demolition of Palestinian homes. The federal lawsuit alleges that Caterpillar violated international and state law by providing to Israeli Defense Forces specially designed bulldozers that it knew would be used to demolish homes and endanger civilians. Over the past year Caterpillar bulldozers have been used to destroy more than 4,000 Palestinian homes. Corrie, 23, was a student at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

## GUATEMALANS PROTEST CAFTA TRADE PACT

In Guatemala, street protests forced the nation's government to twice postpone a vote on signing the Central American Free Trade Agreement. The army threatened to send in 500 troops after hundreds of demonstrators battled with police and blocked access to the Legislative Palace. Police responded with tear gas and water cannons. Last May the United States signed the agreement with Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Opponents of the treaty say it will hurt local farmers and workers and could lead to the privatization of public services.

## HUGO CHAVEZ: THE U.S. IS TRYING TO ASSASSINATE ME

Tension between the U.S. and Venezuela continues to mount. A top Pentagon official has told the Financial Times the Bush administration is launching a new campaign to "contain" Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. Meanwhile Chavez has claimed that he has new evidence that the United States is planning to assassinate him. On a visit to New Dheli, Chavez said, "If anything happens to me, the person responsible will be the president of the United States."

## iraq

**ROAD RAGE:** An uncounted number of Iraqis have been killed at poorly identified U.S. checkpoints throughout the country. This is the aftermath of a typical encounter after the vehicle allegedly "failed to stop."



# CHECKPOINT KILLINGS UNCHECKED

BY JEREMY SCAHILL

While much media attention has been focused on the torture at Abu Ghraib, two other strings of questionable killings by U.S. soldiers have been largely ignored by the American media and not a single soldier has faced any disciplinary action for the deaths. Since the beginning of the invasion in March 2003, the U.S. military has killed more than a dozen journalists in Iraq — more than the Iraqi resistance has. There have also been scores of civilians killed — including women, children and families — at US military checkpoints across the country. Yet not a single soldier has been charged or disciplined in any of these cases, and the internal investigations have become a conveyor belt for exonerations.

The recent killing of an Italian intelligence official and the wounding of an Italian journalist by U.S. forces in Baghdad highlights how out of control the climate of impunity has become. It should serve as a wake-up call to the dangerous reality faced daily by thousands of Iraqis and by unembedded journalists.

On March 4, the car taking newly released hostage Giuliana Sgrena, a veteran war correspondent for *Il Manifesto*, was heading to the Baghdad airport. "We thought we were finally safe, because the area where we were was under the control of the United States," recalls Sgrena. "But then suddenly we found ourselves under an immense amount of bullets, something terrible, without any warning, and we realized that nearby there was an American tank which was shooting at us."

Sgrena was wounded in the attack. Nicola Calipari, the Italian secret service official escorting her, was shot dead. And he wasn't just any agent. Calipari was the international operations chief of Italy's military intelligence service. In a vivid account in *Il Manifesto*, Sgrena wrote, "I heard [Calipari's] last breath as he died on top of me." The other Italian agent in the car was forced to kneel in the road until U.S. troops could identify him.

The U.S. has characterized the shooting as an "horrific accident" and has promised a full investigation. But the administration and the military have also laid blame on the Italians, saying they failed to slow down at a U.S. checkpoint after repeated warnings. Further, they say the Italians did not provide adequate information on Calipari's mission or their travel route.

The Italian government, a close ally of the Bush Administration, disputes this. According to Italy's Foreign Minister, Calipari arrived in Baghdad that Friday, after making contact with the kidnappers. Calipari and a fellow agent checked in with U.S. authorities at the airport, as well as the forces patrolling the area. The agents had been given security badges by the U.S. to allow them to travel freely in the country. After picking up Sgrena from the abandoned vehicle where her kidnappers left her, they drove slowly to the airport, keeping the car lights on to help identify themselves at U.S. checkpoints. News of Sgrena's release was already on

the Reuters newswire and on al Jazeera. The mood in the car was one of celebration — until the vehicle came under intense gunfire.

The checkpoint where Calipari was killed had been set up for the trip of U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte to a dinner that night with Gen. George Casey, commander of U.S. forces in Iraq. To provide security, U.S. soldiers established "mobile checkpoints" — clusters of Humvees armed with .50-caliber machine guns on top. It was one of these details that opened fire on the Italians' vehicle.

Shootings like this happen almost everyday in Iraq. The Sgrena case happens to be receiving media attention because of who was killed. But it indicates the degree to which Iraqis are subject to violence by U.S. forces. Their deaths and injuries go uncounted at numerous checkpoints. The occupation has been rife with these questionable checkpoint shootings, explained away by the military with variations of the same — mantra "failed to slow down," "failed to stop" or "failed to respond to signals." The Pentagon has not admitted culpability in any such deaths.

Nor has the U.S. punished a single soldier responsible for killing journalists in Iraq. "We have had three deaths, and they were all non-embedded, non-coalition nationals and they were all at the hands of the U.S. military, and the reaction of the U.S. authorities in each case was that they were somehow justified," says David Schlesinger, Reuters' global managing editor. "What is the U.S.'s position on non-embeds? Are non-embedded journalists fair game?" One of the BBC's top news anchors, Nik Gowing, said recently

that he was "speak[ing] for a large number of news organizations, many of whom are not really talking publicly about this at the moment," when he made this statement about the dangers facing reporters in Iraq: "The trouble is that a lot of the military — particularly the American...military — do not want us there. And they make it very uncomfortable for us to work. And I think that this...is leading to security forces in some instances feeling it is legitimate to target us with deadly force and with impunity."

While some killings of journalists are classified by the military as "ongoing investigation[s]," most have been labeled self-defense or mistakes. Some are even classified as "justified."

There is a common thread in many cases: the journalists, mostly Arabs, were reporting on places or incidents that the military may not have wanted the world to see — military vehicles in flames, helicopters shot down, fierce resistance against the "liberation" forces or civilian deaths.

The military has refused to adequately investigate these killings and put an end to the climate of impunity. It is time to conduct a full investigation into the military's treatment of journalists and other noncombatants in Iraq with a focus on the killing of Iraqi civilians and unembedded journalists. Every one of the checkpoint killings in Iraq should be heavily scrutinized. The soldiers involved should be interviewed by independent investigators, and witnesses should be deposed. Killers must be held accountable, especially those in uniform.



AN INTERVIEW WITH AFAMIA KADDOUR OF LEBANON

# A Country Divided

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS – “It’s a mess,” Afamia Kaddour said of Lebanon. “People are in shock.”

Kaddour, an instructor of public health practice, American University in Beirut, was here as a delegate to a meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission was assessing the results of the 4th World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995.

“We don’t know what will happen tomorrow,” Kaddour said of the political atmosphere following the assassination of Rafia Hariri, former Lebanese prime minister, on Feb. 14. “The country is boiling.”

In her view, she said: “The thing that everybody agrees upon is we want the Syrians out of our country. At the same time, we don’t want an intervention by the United States or France.

“My personal feeling is that people are sick of war. We cannot afford to go through another civil war. I don’t think it will happen.”

However, she said, Lebanon and its people are “very fragmented. The country has never been divided so explicitly.”

Kaddour continued: “Young people are very lost in terms of their national identity. They fight among themselves. They totally distrust the government, but are not mobilized enough.” Politically, there are many sub-groups,

factions and parties, she explained. These include the Christian right wing (Phalangists, Aounists, Lebanese Forces); the Druze, whose leader Walid Jumblatt has been the main ally of the Syrians for the past 20 years; Moslem (Shia) who support Hezbollah or the Amal party; the Syrian Nationalist party; the Communist Party; and an amorphous anti-Syrian opposition which carries Cedars of Lebanon flags in Beirut street demonstrations.

A grouping called the Democratic Left emerged about a year ago, Kaddour said. The Democratic Left advocates a secular non-sectarian Lebanon. “As long as the Syrians are in the country, that will never happen,” Kaddour said.

Nobody is calling for an end to the sectarian system of government under which seats in Parliament are divided evenly between Moslems and Christians, and the president is a Christian Maronite, the prime minister, a Sunni Moslem, and the speaker of parliament, a Shiite.

Economic conditions are severe, with 30 percent unemployment, Kaddour commented. “People thought that with Hariri, wealth would trickle down. This didn’t happen.”

But, she said, the Hariri government awarded scholarships to students, which in her case made it possible for her to go to American University and receive first, a Bachelor of Sciences degree, and then, a master’s in public health.



**REPORT FROM THE GROUND:** Afamia Kaddour, from Beirut IMC, speaks at a screening of *Leaded/Unleaded* at Blue Stockings. **PHOTO: ANTRIM CASKEY**

Following Hariri’s assassination, the pro-Syrian Lebanese Prime Minister, Omar Karami, resigned. Nine days later the Lebanese parliament reinstated him. Meanwhile, the anti-Syrian opposition held street demonstrations in Beirut, and on March 8, Hezbollah, which opposes Syria’s withdrawal, staged a protest that drew anywhere from 500,000 to 1 million people. Less than a week later, a similar-

sized demonstration against Syria took place in Beirut.

The Bush administration told Damascus to get its troops out of Lebanon. It cited U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 of Sept. 2, 2004, which called upon “all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon.”

Lebanese parliamentary elections are scheduled for May.

## HEZBOLLAH HANGS TOUGH

Exclusive Interview with Hussein Naboulsi, Director of Hezbollah Media Relations

BY TRISH SCHUH

Hezbollah is a Syrian-Iranian sponsored political party that began over 20 years ago to fight the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Accused of bombing the U.S. embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, Hezbollah has long been designated a terrorist organization by the U.S. State Department. Since the end of the Lebanese civil war in 1990, Hezbollah has operated extensive social service networks including schools, hospitals and community centers throughout Lebanon. It also holds 12 seats in parliament.

After massive demonstrations on March 8 of 500,000 Lebanese, pro-Syrian Prime Minister Omar Karamah who resigned on Feb. 28 was reinstated. Targeted by neoconservatives in Washington and Tel Aviv, Hezbollah could determine if Lebanon remains at peace or lapses into civil war.

*Did Hezbollah assassinate Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri or have anything to do with his death?*

Rafiq Hariri was one of our most important national figures. He saved Lebanon in many ways. He got us on our feet. He supported the resistance and worked against Resolution 1559. He believed in our right to liberate Lebanon. And he supported Hezbollah to the international community.

*Who killed him then? Was it Syria?*

There is a U.N. international investigation now that will gather the evidence and determine who committed this crime. In one month we’ll have the answers and we’ll know.

*Could it have been the U.S. or Israel?*

We know this: those behind it were the enemies of the Lebanese. It is an attempt to destabilize the country and damage our interests. Assess who has benefited most from his death to push forward their policies. There may be your answer.

*We have been seeing many demonstrations against Syria – usually estimated at 25,000 or more. Is this accurate? Up to now, they have been around 5,000 to 10,000 strong.*

*Is the Mossad or CIA backing any of it?*

No – no we cannot know this and we must be objective. Those against Syria are not our enemies. They are Lebanese and they have every right to speak out. That is democracy. But they don’t represent all of Lebanon. But there are others with different opinions. They are afraid of our huge numbers. We are not against The Opposition. We are for a Syrian presence. We are not trying to provoke any conflicts that will lead to violence. If we really care about Lebanon, we must all be peaceful and respectful, for the good of the country.

*What will happen to Hezbollah if Syria leaves in compliance with United Nations Resolution 1559?*

Hezbollah is Lebanese and supported by the Lebanese. We are not an outside party from Sri Lanka, Hong Kong or foreign shores. Our members come from our own farms and villages and cities. We have support from many Arab partners. We are democratically elected.

*But Syria and Iran are foreign.*

We are proud to be associated with them. Without their help, we would not have been able to liberate Lebanon from occupation.

*Do you see demands to disband Hezbollah as a prelude to an attack on Iran?*  
America is already stuck in one quagmire...

*What if the EU stops supporting you or designates you as a terrorist entity?*

Chirac and the Europeans know who we are and that we have a right to exist under the UN Charter.



*If the Lebanese government itself orders you to disband, will you?*

We are not just a militia. We must make that decision when it happens. Before then, I can not comment.

*This is the third in an interview series with Hezbollah officials in Beirut. To read the entire series, check: [nyc.indymedia.org](http://nyc.indymedia.org).*



# Venezuela's Challenge Building a 21st Century Socialism

BY DERRICK O'KEEFE

In recent months, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has begun to explicitly advocate for socialism, marking a significant development for both the Bolivarian Revolution in that country and for the broader international movement.

There is no doubt that the U.S. government understands the significance of an oil-rich country with a radical, anti-imperialist government, which has received repeated, indisputable democratic mandates, advocating for socialism. Simply put, the government in Caracas poses the gravest “threat of a good example” since the Cuban Revolution of 1959. As if taunting Uncle Sam for its historic failure to destroy and isolate Cuba completely, Chavez now flaunts his close friendship with Fidel Castro, inviting thousands of Cuban doctors to Venezuela, and sending oil at preferential prices to the energy-starved Caribbean island.

Little surprise that, with a newly emboldened government and a demoralized opposi-

More than just defending Venezuela's right to self-determination progressives should take seriously the challenge to 're-invent' socialism.

tion, there have been repeated warnings of plots to assassinate Chavez. He addressed the situation with a threat of his own, announcing on his *Alo Presidente* radio show that “the Venezuelan people will stop even one drop of oil from going to the U.S. if there is any attempt made on my life.”

While flexing oil muscle in an effort to dissuade U.S. efforts to eliminate him, Chavez remained on the offensive: “I am convinced, and I think that this conviction will be for the rest of my life, that the path to a new, better and possible world, is not capitalism, the path is socialism.”

The global movement for social justice must take seriously the continuing threats against the Bolivarian process in Venezuela. But more than just defending Venezuela's right to self-determination, though, progressives should also take up the challenge to “re-invent” socialism.

The movement against corporate globalization has, rather proudly, avoided projecting any specific solutions to the ills of capitalism, eschewing the left's classic “meta-nar-

rative,” that capitalism would inevitably be replaced by socialism and communism on a world scale. Political pluralism became a watchword for the World Social Forum and its leading convenors; certainly this could be understood as a healthy and understandable reaction to the evils perpetrated in the name of socialism throughout the 20th century.

But while Kampuchea's killing fields, the Soviet Union's gulags, and the repugnant bureaucratic privileges and internecine murders sullied the image of socialism, so too has social democracy – from the chauvinist betrayal marked by support for the carnage of World War I right up to Tony Blair's imperial adventure in Iraq.

This record of failure has left the right triumphant. Buoyed by the fall of the Berlin Wall and “actually existing socialism,” the right has been on the offensive over the past 15 years, aggressively implementing neo-liberal “reforms” globally, either through the WTO and economic blackmail, or through cruise missiles and “regime change.” So the Bolivarian Revolution, together with other vibrant social movements in Latin America and global resistance to war and occupation in the Middle East, represents a welcome and overdue

challenge to Empire.

At this year's World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Chavez was unquestionably the most popular figure, his presence revealing deep-seated resentment of the moderate approach and collaboration that Brazil's Lula is taking with IMF dictates.

Chavez, in fact, had to intervene to quell a packed stadium's chants of “Chavez si, Lula no!” Before that same crowd, the Venezuelan leader made his most overt ideological statement to date: “We must reclaim socialism as a thesis, a project and a path, but a new type of socialism, a humanist one, which puts humans and not machines or the state ahead of everything. That's the debate we must promote around the world, and the WSF is a good place to do it.”

Let's hope this call is heeded, and that the debate begins in earnest. Defeating U.S. imperialism and developing viable alternatives to neo-liberalism depends on us meeting this key challenge for the 21st century.

*Adapted from an article that originally appeared in sevenoaksmag.com.*



**CHECKMATE.** Hundreds of Israeli checkpoints carve up the West Bank. Now the Palestinian Authority is taking over many of them along with other tasks of the occupation. *PHOTO: MATTHEW CASSEL*

## Palestine's New Gov't ON THE GROUND IN OCCUPIED PALESTINE

BY MATTHEW CASSEL

**RAMALLAH, OCCUPIED WEST BANK** — Before the recent Palestinian elections' politicians like George Bush, Ariel Sharon and Tony Blair supported Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) saying he was the only candidate they would accept to head the Palestinian Authority (PA). They said he represented the best chance to make peace between Israelis and Palestinians, but few asked just how he would make peace. After months as president of the PA, Abu Mazen's vision of peace is becoming clear.

### OCCUPATION IN DISGUISE

Recently on the way into Ramallah, the taxi I was riding in neared a point on the road where Israeli soldiers often stop cars full of Palestinians on their way to work or school. As we rounded a corner to view the long, winding road, everyone in the taxi looked anxiously ahead and exhaled in relief when they saw no signs of a checkpoint in sight.

We continued a little further, and to our surprise there was an Israeli military jeep parked on the side of the road. Except something was strange – the young Israeli soldiers weren't shouting at Palestinians and shooting into the air, but instead they were sitting on the hood of the jeep laughing with each other, relaxing as if someone else was doing their job for them. Less than a minute later we realized – someone else was.

It was a picture similar to an Israeli checkpoint: dozens of cars lined up, children's heads popping out of windows trying to catch a glimpse of the reason they weren't moving, and a group of soldiers with large guns stopping cars and checking IDs. But the soldiers here were not Israelis. This was a Palestinian Authority checkpoint.

This is Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority's idea of making peace: while they become better friends with Israel and the United States getting more money and power, the PA takes over parts of the occupation. They have already developed special intelligence forces that share information with Israel, arrested many, been in armed clashes with Palestinians, set up checkpoints and assumed a variety of other roles from the Israeli Army.

While all of this is happening Israel can sit back and relax. International pressure against it will subside when the decades-old occupation appears to be ending, but in reality it will have only transformed itself.

### HOW WAS ABBAS ELECTED?

It is simple. He wasn't. Voting for the president of the PA was limited to those over the age of 18 living among the 3.8 million Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. From this number, Abu Mazen received roughly 28 percent of the votes. More importantly, those not eligible to vote included more than 6 million Palestinian refugees living in the Diaspora. Few of these refugees would support a candidate who doesn't seem to care for securing their fundamental right of return.

But still 28 percent did check the box next to Mahmoud Abbas's name; it's important to know why. One Palestinian in the West Bank explained, “The people here in Palestine, we need the peace. We can't live like this anymore, it's gone on too long, we need to be able to live and feel some kind of freedom like everyone else, even if we know it's not perfect. I don't like Abu Mazen, but I think if there is ever going to be peace, then he is the best chance.”

Since the intifada began in September 2000, thousands of Palestinians have been killed, tens of thousands imprisoned and entire cities destroyed. Now they want to get back to their lives, and find work to support their families. As one man put it, “the people here just need a break.” Because of this – not Abu Mazen and the PA – the streets seem to be calming down.

### RELATIVE CALM

Even during this relative calm, the Israeli occupation, with assistance from the PA, will still control all aspects of Palestinian life. Checkpoints will remain, restricting movement. Apartheid walls and Israeli-only roads will still divide the West Bank into isolated cantons. Borders and the Palestinian economy will remain controlled by Israel, overseeing all imports and exports. And even with the “pull-out” of 7,500 Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip, giant cranes and construction crews will continue building in West Bank settlements, confiscating more and more Palestinian land.

Abu Mazen should not be seen as a chance for peace in the Middle East, but rather a puppet in the hands of Israel's occupation. He is unable to do anything that reflects the will of the Palestinian people. If he tries, his power will be taken away in an instant. This is his predicament: if Israel doesn't remove him, then the Palestinians will eventually submerge him in an uprising like what happened with Arafat in 2000. Whatever happens, Abu Mazen's place is already irrelevant on the route to bringing justice to Palestine.



**SOCIALISM ADVOCATE.** Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is using state oil revenues to build an economically just state.



# Okinawa Grandmas Take on U.S. Base

FROM PROGRESSIVE PORTAL

If you think you know what it means to be a dedicated anti-militarism activist, wait until you hear about the grandmothers of Henoko.

Okinawa Island in the southern end of Japan is the reluctant host to one of the biggest concentrations of U.S. military force outside of North America. Twenty percent of the island is covered by military bases. Not content with occupying one-fifth of Okinawa's landmass, the Pentagon now wants to build an offshore airbase in the pristine waters off Henoko. The military is claiming this is a tradeoff for the mid-1990s promise to close the massive Futenma military base, but Japanese activists have discovered planning documents for the offshore airbase dating to 1965.

Plans indicate offshore base would be built atop fragile coral reefs and sea-grass beds, destroying the habitat of several endangered species, including the gentle dugong, a sea mammal that is a close cousin to the manatee and is a symbol of peace to the Japanese people. Because of this, the Japanese government is required to conduct an environmental assessment that itself will damage the environment, including by drilling dozens of holes in the ocean floor.

The project is at a crucial stage. The first five drilling platforms were recently built offshore. That's when the grandmothers of Henoko swung into action.

Before the drilling platforms arrived, anti-military and pro-environment activists, some as old as 90, sat in at government offices for 10 days, occupied the beachfront for more than 250 days and held a 20-day hunger strike. When the action moved offshore, so did the opposition. The scrupulously nonviolent activists, some of whom had not previously learned to swim, became skilled rowers and divers. Former Naha City Council member Suzuyo Takazato tells of 70-year-olds in wet suits diving into the waters to disrupt the attempts to bore holes in the sea floor. At the World Social Forum in Brazil and on a subsequent visit to the U.S., Ms. Takazato displayed pictures of women and elders blocking drilling workers in rowboats and occupying the drilling platforms.

Okinawan protesters occupied a platform, preventing installation of seabed-drilling equipment. Rowing out to the platforms at 6:30 every morning, day after day, week after week, the resisters have managed to prevent all drilling to date. Workers have not yet been able to install a single drilling engine on any of the platforms.

Other avenues are also being pursued. Citizens voted against the offshore base in a referendum. The mayor, who opposed the airbase, was then called to Tokyo, and after a four-hour closed-door meeting in the prime minister's office. He declared the people's wishes null and void – then resigned and was

replaced by a pro-base mayor. A lawsuit against the base is proceeding in U.S. federal court. (U.S. groups participating in the lawsuit were introduced to the issue by ProgressivePortal.org.) But thus far, the U.S. and Japanese governments have not budged.

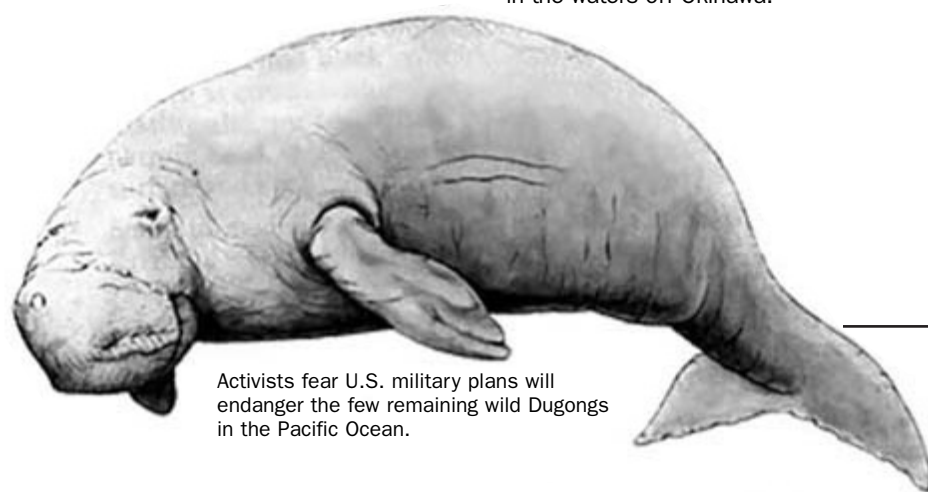
The Japanese subspecies of dugong is highly endangered. Scientists believe there may be as few as 25-50 animals remaining in the wild. While dugongs have no natural enemies, they are at risk because of human activity – including the attempts to conduct the drilling survey prior to building the airbase. If the survey continues, and particularly if the base is built, they will almost surely be wiped out forever.

Activists in Okinawa and Tokyo are asking for help to prevent further base-construction activity and save the endangered creature of the Henoko coral reef.

For more information, [progressiveportal.org/links/index-dugong.html](http://progressiveportal.org/links/index-dugong.html)



Yoko Yamaguchi, 64, from Ginowan, stages a hunger strike in front of the Defense Facilities Administration Naha Bureau to protest the planned construction of a Marine Corps air station in the waters off Okinawa.



Activists fear U.S. military plans will endanger the few remaining wild Dugongs in the Pacific Ocean.

# Haiti's Torment

WORLD ABANDONS PRO-ARISTIDE MAJORITY

BY MARK WEISBROT

One year ago, Washington helped depose the elected government of Haiti. The populist ex-priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti's president, became the first elected leader to be overthrown twice by armed thugs supported by the United States.

The first time was in 1991, after he had served only seven months as the country's first democratically elected president. At the time, the evidence of Washington's culpability was circumstantial: The leaders of the coup were on the CIA payroll. A death squad organization that killed thousands of Aristide's supporters during the 1991-1994 dictatorship was headed by Emmanuel Constant, who told the world on CBS' 60 Minutes that the CIA hired him for the job.

This time, our government's role in the coup was more overt. "This is a case where the United States turned off the tap," said economist Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Colombia University. "I believe they did that deliberately to bring down Aristide." Sachs was referring to the cut off of funding from the Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank from 2001 to 2003. It was unusually cruel: Haiti is desperately poor, with the worst incidence of malnutrition and disease in the hemisphere.

But it worked, in that it made people's lives more miserable in Haiti. The economy shrank, and Washington poured in tens of millions of dollars through USAID, the International Republican Institute and other organizations to forge a political opposition. It was a movement that could never win an election, but it controlled the media and had some heavily armed former military personnel – including convicted murderers – who wanted to get back in power.

On Feb. 29 of last year they got their wish. As their insurrection closed in on Port-au-Prince, U.S. officials told Aristide they could not guarantee his safety – despite the fact that they managed to secure the airport with just a handful of U.S. Marines. According to U.S.

press reports, they told Aristide he was going to a news conference. They took him instead to the airport where he boarded a plane to an unknown location, which turned out to be the Central African Republic.

The Bush administration's major allegation against Aristide was that he allowed armed gangs, called "Chimeres," to attack his political opponents. Whether or not these charges are true, the past cannot match the hell on Earth that is now Haiti's existence.

The Center for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Miami Law School conducted an investigation in Haiti last November. Among the findings: "summary executions are a police tactic," and the jails are filled with political prisoners – including the ousted constitutional government's Prime Minister Yvon Neptune and Interior Minister Jocelerme Privert. Many of these prisoners are held without charge, beaten and denied medical help.

Cité Soleil, a horribly poor slum of 250,000 people, is under virtual lockdown, cut off from commercial traffic. Young men cannot leave for fear of arrest, since the neighborhood is known to support Aristide. People who are shot by police, army or pro-government thugs treat their injuries at home, because anyone who shows up at a hospital with a bullet wound can be arrested. Bodies of victims can be seen in the streets, being devoured by dogs and pigs.

The goal of the present government seems to be to use violence and fear to intimidate the pro-Aristide population, which appears still to be the majority and who continue to demand the return of their elected president. It is eerily similar to the 1991-1994 dictatorship in both its objectives and methods.

But they are making sure that, unlike last time, Haitians do not escape the island to embarrass the U.S. government by washing up – alive or dead – on the shores of Florida. The silence here regarding Haiti's torment, in the media and among major U.S. human rights organizations, is deafening and shameful.

*Reprinted from counterpunch.org.*

the new  
SPACE

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR PLURALISTIC  
ANTI-CAPITALIST EDUCATION

## TEACHERS, SPEAKERS, AND ORGANIZERS:

Stanley Aronowitz, Jack Z. Bratich, Stephen Eric Bronner, Andrea Fishman, Jeannette Gabriel, Loren Goldner, David Graeber, Robin Hahnel, Jesse Heiwa, Charles Herr, Joshua Howard, Anne Jaclard, Andrew Kliman, Louis Kontos, Joel Kovel, Raymond Lampe, Alan W. Moore, Bertell Ollman, Howard Seligman, Bill Weinberg, Seth G. Weiss

## CLASSES:

ART LIFE  
Alan W. Moore  
Saturdays, 12 – 2pm  
8 sessions, beginning April 2, sliding scale

TAXATION AND FINANCE  
Howard F. Seligman  
Tuesdays, 7:45pm – 9:45pm  
8 sessions, beginning May 3rd, sliding scale

## TALKS:

THE MARXIST CRITIQUE OF IDEOLOGY: WHAT IT IS,  
HOW IT WORKS, AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT ESPECIALLY NOW  
Bertell Ollman

WEDNESDAY APRIL 27, 7PM, SLIDING SCALE

FIGHTING FOR REFORMS WITHOUT BECOMING REFORMIST  
Robin Hanhel • based on his new book, "Economic Justice and Democracy"  
WEDNESDAY MAY 25, 7PM, SLIDING SCALE

All events held at the Fusion Arts Museum,  
57 Stanton Street, on Manhattan's  
Lower East Side.

Topics of upcoming classes and events will include the anti-war movement, immigrants and American labor history, American grassroots movements, Latin America, feminism, queer liberation, autonomism, anarchism, and Marx. Check website for updates and more information about the school.

WWW.NEW-SPACE.MAHOST.ORG  
(800) 377-6183 P.O. Box 19, PLANETARIUM STATION, NYC 10024





ILLUSTRATION BY ANDREW SMENOS

## Condi gets her groove back

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

Freudian slips are fun. At a Washington dinner a few years ago, then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was speaking about policy when she said, "As I was telling my husband... I mean as I was telling President Bush." In the awkward moment, hard judgments were silently made by the table guests, judgments about her sex, her obsession with power and the loneliness it causes in her life.

The slip of the tongue was grist for the Beltway, a truth glimpsed in conversation and captured in gossip. It's not the first time Condi's sex life has been examined. It's been asked, is she a lesbian or does she have a fetish for white men? Yet how can a woman with such intelligence be reduced so quickly to her body? Maybe even more important, with a world at war why speculate on her sexuality? Why do we care if Condi gets her groove back?

The obvious reason is that the black female body is hyper-sexualized. Ever since slavery it has been the site of a power struggle; from

mass rape to breed new slaves, to forced sterilization to ethnically cleanse the census of unborn black citizens and now as sexual commodities in Hip Hop. Knowing this, Condi has kept up a prim and asexual image. She uses clean, antiseptic speech to challenge those who doubt her competence. Such intense control makes the audience even more curious about if she does lose it. Who sees Condi go buck wild?

Another reason could be that the fate of millions, lie in the hands of the Bush inner circle. When so much power is focused in such a small group we surround them with lights, cameras and tape recorders, hoping to hear what they are afraid to admit. If Freud was right when he wrote, "A speech blunder aims not at the betrayal of the speaker but to the enlightenment of someone outside the scene," does that mean she was sending Bush a hopeless message of love?

The problem of searching for Condi's lover is that it's not Bush-the-man, but the power they wield together, that she loves. After he hired her for Secretary of State, she

dressed in black and strode the stage in knee-high spiked boots flaunting a dominatrix style. She looked as if she will enjoy power the way the ruling class usually does, by exercising it. The danger of such eroticized power is that it creates justifications for itself.

In a way, Clinton was less dangerous; his sex wasn't sublimated into a grand narrative but fed by a constant stream of women. It is when sex is sublimated into dreams of Manifest Destiny or an endless War on Terror that enemies are created simply to continue the pleasure of pursuing them. What's dangerous is that they can be chased into every corner, through every door until cops bust down the front doors of citizens who dare vote for the internal enemy of the opposition party.

All that being said, there is a part of me, a blind race-loyal part, that wants to celebrate Condi's rise to power. I want to explain it or excuse it or offer myself to her as the enemy, so the world will be spared her wrath. I want to give her chains and electric cables and snarling dogs and hoods and say, "Here Condi, Abu Ghraib me."

## Return of the Newsreel: News From Iraq Not Seen on TV

If there is one thing regarding the war in Iraq that most people agree on, it's that the entire story is not being portrayed in the mainstream media. Those who support the war complain that the so-called "liberal" media is overly negative, while those against the war accuse the corporate media of compliantly facilitating the Bush administration's agenda. The surge in widely distributed documentary films has provided supplementary material in this ongoing cultural conversation. Two very different recently released projects now add to the mix.

Filmmaker Michael Tucker went to Iraq to produce a film on the security business in Baghdad. After getting to know many of the American soldiers during his time there, he decided to produce another film to tell their stories. He spent two months in 2003 embedded with the 2/3 Field Artillery, living with them in a bombed-out palace of Uday Hussein, now nicknamed "Gunner Palace."

Tucker interviews the troops in moments of sheer boredom and tense anticipation, relaxing in the palace's pool and patrolling the streets of Baghdad. He follows them on various operations, in which they break down doors, raid the homes of suspected bomb builders, and hand out propaganda leaflets as part of "psyops" missions. However, the view he presents of all of this expresses quite

### GUNNER PALACE

DIR. BY MICHAEL TUCKER AND PETRA EPPERLEIN  
NOMADOS FILM, 2004  
85 MINUTES

### SHOCKING AND AWFUL: A GRASSROOTS RESPONSE TO WAR AND OCCUPATION

DEEP DISH TV, 2004  
3 DVDS, 12 28-MIN. SHOWS

clearly the limitations of the embedded journalist.

The film often seems like an episode of *COPS* set in the Middle East. Riding along with them in their Humvees, Tucker films the soldiers in tight close-ups, looking up at them, as they talk about what it's like being in Iraq. The troops are young, rugged, and almost never without a big gun or

a guitar in their hands. While the soldiers' insights into why they are there and how they feel about what they've done there are often compelling, Tucker offers no context for their words or actions. He never talks to any Iraqis who aren't assisting the coalition forces, and he cuts away whenever any real action starts to go down, ensuring that viewers never see the soldiers do anything remotely questionable. The deepest conclusion offered is that war is hell.

Though produced with almost no budget, and cut almost entirely by Tucker on his computer while still in Iraq, there is nothing raw or unfiltered about this film. Rather it is highly manipulative: Many of the scenes seem staged, and the footage itself is processed to appear grainy, like how war footage is "supposed" to look.

While it apparently meant something to these soldiers that someone would see what they are going through and hear what they have to say about it, it also seems like performing for Tucker's

camera is yet another form of exploitation they are willing to give themselves up to. In the end, "Gunner Palace" does a disservice to these soldiers, the film's viewers, and, probably most of all, the Iraqi people by not asking deeper questions.

Deep Dish TV's 12-episode project is almost the diametric opposite—both its strengths and weaknesses derive from the breadth of its material. The sum of the efforts of numerous independent film producers and editors, "Shocking and Awful" covers many of the critical narratives regarding the war in Iraq that are downplayed if not entirely ignored by the mainstream media.

Each show pulls together shorter segments by various producers under titles like, "Standing With the Women of Iraq," and "Empire and Oil." While this offers a wealth of perspectives, it also makes some episodes seem unfocused. As a whole, however, the series impresses and inspires by featuring the voices of real people surviving in horrific circumstances and dedicating their lives to working for a better world.

"The Real Face of Occupation" lets Iraqis themselves describe what living under decades of brutal dictatorship and now the devastation of war does to people. For anyone whose anger over the war has been deadened by frustration, these personal indictments of the occupation from the people suffering it will re-awaken you. "National Insecurity," dedicated to the late Farouk Abdel-Muhti, tells the stories of the hundreds who were rounded up and detained after 9/11. "Globalization at Gunpoint" features interviews with Naomi Klein, and examines the real aims behind the so-called "War on Terror."

The most striking episode is the final one, "Baghdad." A montage of disparate footage from before and after the invasion, the film demands the engagement of the viewer by presenting an array of often terrifying scenes, with no subtitles or captions as explanation. It induces in its audience a tiny bit of the maddening, desperate confusion of existence in Baghdad, and then rewards its attention with evidence that life and joy nevertheless endure there.

—SUSAN CHENELLE







# Hunter S. Thompson

By STEVEN WISHNIA

Most of the legend of Hunter S. Thompson, who killed himself on Feb. 20, came from his “gonzo” journalism, his getting wasted and writing about whatever warped encounters and hallucinations crossed his perceptions. Thompson certainly earned that reputation: His book *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* grew out of a 1971 *Rolling Stone* article about going to a narcotics agents’ convention in Las Vegas while obnoxiously blasted on a mix of mescaline, tequila and ether.

Yet Thompson would not have been so celebrated and mourned if all he’d produced was stoned-out babble incomprehensible and worthless to the sober. Describing himself as a “drunken hillbilly with a heart full of hate,” he dissected the vileness of powerful men, denouncing “greedheads” with vitriolic, righteous wit and almost Biblical power. (Though not religious, he said he liked to steal from the Book of Revelations because “I love the wild power of the language and the purity of the madness that governs it and makes it music.”) He had deep roots as a reporter, trekking through South America as a politics and travel-story stringer in the early ‘60s, riding alongside the Hell’s Angels outlaw-biker gang for the *Nation* story that got him his first book (*Hell’s Angels*) and a stomping from several of its subjects, and covering the 1971 riots in East Los Angeles after the police murder of Chicano journalist Ruben Salazar.

Thompson’s best work was *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail, 1972*, based on his *Rolling Stone* election coverage. Richard Nixon, he wrote, “represents the dark, venal, and incurably violent side of the American character almost every other country in the world has learned to fear and

despise.... He speaks for the Werewolf in us, the bully, the predatory shyster who turns into something unspeakable, full of claws and bleeding string-warts, on nights when the moon draws too close.” Thompson, observed Timothy Crouse in *The Boys on the Bus*, wrote the unmentionable truth that the rules of conventional journalism denied, “that some of the candidates were shams and liars, that the process was unjust and anachronistic.” That campaign took its toll on Thompson emotionally. In October 1972, when it was obvious that Nixon was going to win re-election, he filed a dolorously truncated piece, saying, “words are no longer important at this stage of the campaign.”

His later years found him in decline. His moral outrage remained intact and he could still sling invective with the best, but he often repeated the same riffs, and he just didn’t do the legwork. If he’d done pioneering work in 1972 by going out on the campaign trail and speaking the truth that mainstream reporters wished they could tell, he spent most of the 1992 campaign at home, firing off rants through his fax machine.

The Bush era must have been painful for Thompson. If Americans’ failure to recognize Richard Nixon’s foulness sent him into despair, how was he handling the reign of George W. Bush, whose regime revels in putting lies over on the “liberal media,” tauntingly flaunting its abuse of power – while more Americans know the name of Scott Peterson’s mistress than the number of Iraqi civilians killed? How did his soul cope after 30 years of screaming at a wall, while it inhabited a body full of collapsing bones and a liquor-ravaged liver? Coming in the wake of the December suicide of crack reporter Gary Webb, Hunter Thompson’s death calls up a twist on Bob Marley: How long will our prophets kill themselves while we stand aside and look?

## Remembering Jolie Rickman

By TIARA JEWELL



Jolie Rickman, an accomplished musician and dedicated activist in the peace and justice movements, passed away Jan. 19 after battling ovarian cancer.

In her 34 years, Jolie touched an immeasurable number of people through her music and tireless work with such organizations as the Hen Foundation, SOA Watch and the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Jolie, who lived in Brooklyn with her partner, Bill Mazza, was raised in the outskirts of Chicago and also called Syracuse, New York home. She independently released three full-length albums

and performed with such artists as Pete Seeger, Pamela Means and Ember Swift and at Ladyfest East, SOA Watch protests and Take Back the Night events across the country.

Jolie used her gifts of music and organizing to make the world a more just and loving place. She demonstrated the impact that the drive and commitment of one person can have in motivating a whole segment of people. Her music is both sweet and sarcastic and infused with a style and passion that invokes the spirit of other fearless women, such as Buffy Sainte-Marie and Emma Goldman, whom she admired.

She will be remembered for her amazing talent, big heart, vibrant shows and infuriated protests. Through her strong legacy, Jolie continues to inspire us to rage for the peace and social justice that she cared for and worked so passionately toward.

A memorial service for Jolie Rickman will be held on Sunday, April 10 at 2 p.m. at the Brecht Forum, 451 West Street.

Now on DVD!

## The Most Powerful WMD. The Truth.

“Engrossing and provocative.”  
- Boston Globe



From **Danny Schechter** “*The News Dissector*” and **Cinema Libre Distribution** a documentary guaranteed to question everything you thought you knew about the Media.

There were two wars in Iraq - one was fought with armies of soldiers, bombs and a fearsome military force. The other was fought alongside it with cameras, satellites, armies of journalists and propaganda techniques. One war was rationalized as an effort to find and disarm WMDs; the other was carried out by even more powerful WMDs, Weapons of Mass Deception.



To Order:

[www.docworkers.com](http://www.docworkers.com) or  
[www.wmdthefilm.com](http://www.wmdthefilm.com)

radical bookstore | activist center | fair trade cafe  
172 Allen St. • 212.777.6028  
[bluestockings.com](http://bluestockings.com)

**Saturday, March 19th @ 7pm - Free**  
Reading: Michael Muhammad Knight “The Taqwacores”  
What is Punk Islam? Michael Muhammad Knight will explain his peculiar conversion to Islam and read from his book “The Taqwacores,” the first-ever Muslim Punk novel.

**Tuesday, March 22nd @ 7pm - Free**  
Reading: Pooja Makhijani “Under Her Skin”  
The collection of essays in “Under Her Skin: How Girls Experience Race in America,” examines the sometimes savage, sometimes innocent, and always complex ways in which race shapes American lives.

**Thursday, March 24th @ 7pm - \$5 to \$10 suggested donation**  
Bluestockings Benefit: The Cross Gender Caravan (at The Slipper Room)  
Featuring: Tennessee Jones, Charlie Anders and Carolyn Connelly  
The Cross Gender Caravan is coming to town! Tennessee Jones’ (yup, our Tennessee!) is reading “Deliver Me from Nowhere”, a collection of short stories based on Bruce Springsteen’s album Nebraska. Charlie Anders, publisher of “Other Magazine” reads from “Choir Boy,” a mystical, magical coming of age novel about a gender variant twelve year old. Carolyn Connelly is a performance poet, sex educator, creator of the zine “A Brooklyn Diary” and was the keynote speaker at this year’s Transfeminism conference. The Slipper Room is located at 167 Orchard (just around the corner from Bluestockings) and you must be 21 to enter.

# The Brecht Forum On Manhattan’s Left Bank

We’re opening up in our new home at 451 West Street (between Bethune & Bank) in the Far West Village with an exciting array of new classes, forums, exhibits, performances & popular education workshops.



& MUCH MUCH MORE

**A, C, E or L to 14th Street & 8th Ave.** walk down 8th Ave. to Bethune, turn right, walk west to the River, turn left

**1, 2, 3 or 9 to 14th Street & 7th Ave.** get off at south end of station, walk west on 12th St. to 8th Avenue & follow directions above



**PATH Train to Christopher Street** north on Greenwich Street to Bank Street, left to the river.

**#11 or #20 Bus to Abingdon Square,** west on Bethune

**#14D Bus to Bethune & Greenwich Streets** walk west to the river

**#8 Bus to 10th & West Streets**

Full Program Info at

[www.brechtforum.org](http://www.brechtforum.org)



# Support the Indy in style

**DONATE, SUBSCRIBE, & BUY HOT MERCHANDISE:  
INDYPENDENT.ORG**



**DONATE TODAY TO HELP KEEP THE INDY GOING AND GET COOL STUFF**

## **YES, I SUPPORT INDEPENDENT MEDIA**

- ☐ **\$100** free t-shirt (specify size, M or F)
- ☐ **\$75** 1 year subscription
- ☐ **\$50** copy of best-selling full-color poster of WMDs in the United States
- ☐ **\$25** our eternal gratitude

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to *The Independent* and send to:  
34 East 29th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016.